



BOROUGH OF BOSTON
AND
PORT HEALTH AUTHORITY

Annual Report
of the
Medical Officer of Health
FOR THE YEAR 1945.

BOROUGH OF BOSTON

AND

PORT HEALTH AUTHORITY

To :—The Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors of the Borough of Boston.

Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

This has been a year of substantial progress in all branches of Public Health administered by the appropriate Committees of your Council.

The Birth Rate and Death Rate remains substantially the same as last year, there being a high Birth Rate and a moderately low Death Rate.

The Infantile Mortality Rate, that is deaths of infants under one year, has again fallen. The figure for 1938 was 57 per 1,000 of live births, 1943 45 ; 1944 29 ; 1945 27. These figures reflect great credit on the work of the Health Visitors, and the Midwives working under the Holland County Council.

The Ante-Natal Clinic has been a great success and abnormal midwifery cases, which might have caused infantile deaths, have been promptly dealt with. Doubtful cases have been referred for X-ray and 39 expectant mothers have received dental treatment. Emergency cases are immediately admitted to Boston Hospital for expert treatment, and the net result of all these services is the very low Infantile Mortality Rate of 27 per 1,000.

During the year the Health Centre premises have been handed over to the Holland County Council, but the Borough services are still carried out by arrangement.

The Welfare Centre has functioned very successfully and there would have been more attending but for the fact that it is too far from the centre of the town and mothers in the more populated council houses area have a long way to come.

The Cleansing Station has been working continuously during the year and 588 cleansings were carried out. 205 cases of scabies were notified in the Borough and practically all received treatment.

Immunisation of children under 5 years of age was intensified and every baby attaining the age of 1 year was visited by the Health Visitor. The parent was given a card and leaflet and informed that the baby could be immunised either by the baby's own doctor or by myself at the Welfare Centre. This personal contact is, in my opinion, likely to be more successful than poster propaganda.

There is still a leeway to make up, but I hope to reduce this in the coming year.

The Day Nursery has done most excellent work and has been a great boon to mothers going out to work. I should, however, like to see its scope widened so that not only working mothers but mothers needing a temporary rest, either during a confinement or in special cases of illness, could use it, thus the harassed mother may have a respite knowing that her children under school age are being well cared for.

A good deal of controversy has arisen as to whether children attending Day Nurseries are liable to infectious diseases. This I have not found to be so, in fact cases in households are found which would otherwise be missed.

The lower attendances at the Day Nursery are, however, chiefly due to the fact that the Nursery was closed for a month owing to illness and shortage of staff.

Maternity Beds allotted to your Council by the Boston General Hospital have always been fully booked long before the date of the expected confinement. The number of beds available is not at all adequate, and I have had to refuse a considerable number of cases, many of whom would have benefited by admission to a Maternity Hospital.

As an instance of this, at the present moment (June, 1946) all beds are booked for the rest of the year and I am now booking for early 1947. Consequently it is obvious that further accommodation is urgently required. Home conditions in many cases, owing to the aftermath of the late war, are very unsatisfactory.

Infectious Diseases. 1945 was notable for the large number of measles cases notified, 620 compared with 8 last year. Scabies notifications have increased from 24 to 205. This is largely due to the fact that cleansing can be carried out and many of the cases notified come to me personally to have their complaint cleared up. Scarlet fever cases show a small rise but there is nothing in the way of an epidemic.

Such is a brief survey of the year's work, and I take this opportunity of thanking all the members of the Staff of the Public Health Department for their loyal and enthusiastic services. Such progress could not be made without their continued and loyal co-operation.

I am,

Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

D. C. ROBERTSON.
Medical Officer of Health.

Public Health Department,
8, Bridge Street,
Boston, Lincs.
July, 1946.

SECTION A.

STATISTICAL SUMMARY.

Area (in acres)	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	3,255
Number of inhabited houses according to	Rate					
Books	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	6,713
Rateable Value (December 31st, 1945)	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	£131,616
Sum represented by a penny rate	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	£515
Population	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	21,510

VITAL STATISTICS, 1945.

	Total	Male	Female
Live Births—Legitimate	397	211	186
Illegitimate	47	26	21
Stillbirths—Legitimate	15	7	8
Illegitimate	—	—	—
Deaths	277	138	139
Birth Rate per 1,000 population	.....	.....	20.64
Stillbirth rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births	.....	.....	32.68
Death rate per 1,000 of the population	.....	.....	12.87

DEATH RATE OF INFANTS UNDER ONE YEAR OF AGE

(a) All infants per 1,000 live births	.....	.....	27.02
(b) Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births	.....	.....	22.67
(c) Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	.....	.....	63.83
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	.....	.....	nil.
Deaths from Whooping Cough	.....	.....	1
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	.....	.....	nil.
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	.....	.....	34
Deaths from Heart Diseases (all ages)	.....	.....	71

SECTION B.

LABORATORY AND AMBULANCE FACILITIES.

The war-time facilities for laboratory and ambulance service are still in force, and have functioned satisfactorily.

The following Laboratories are still available to carry out the examination of bacteriological and pathological specimens from the district if required :—

- (1) The Public Health Laboratory, Technical College,
LINCOLN.
- (2) The Public Health Laboratory, Isolation Hospital,
Groby Road, LEICESTER.

NURSING IN THE HOME.

The arrangements operated by the Boston and District Nursing Association remained unchanged during the year.

The position regarding Home Helps remain unchanged, despite advertisements in the Local Press appealing for suitable women to come forward. There appears to be little chance of forming a Scheme until the labour position becomes easier.

TREATMENT CENTRES AND CLINICS.

Arrangements in connection with the Tuberculosis Dispensary and the Venereal Diseases Clinic remain unchanged.

The Infant Welfare Centre, and the Ophthalmic Clinic, are being held at the Health Centre, 4, London Road.

CLEANSING STATION.

During the year, this has more than proved its worth as the table below will show. Commenced during 1944 for the cleansing of cases of scabies which might occur in the Borough of Boston and the Boston Rural District area, we have been able to assist Authorities in the neighbourhood, when their own cleansing arrangements have had to be suspended.

The cost of the service is borne by each Authority pro. rata. to the number of cleansings given.

As was the case in 1944, the majority of those treated have found one cleansing sufficient and the Cleansing Station can be said to be one of our most successful ventures.

Authority		School Age	Other ages	Total
Boston Borough	.....	170	183	353
Boston Rural	.....	64	116	180
Other Authorities	.....	25	30	55
Total	.....	259	329	588

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.

ANTE-NATAL CLINIC.

This has been held at the Welfare Centre, 4, London Road, each Monday afternoon, the Consultant, Dr. A. Eckford, making 373 examinations at 49 sessions. 10 cases have been referred for X-ray and 39 for Dental treatment. As mentioned in my report, the careful examinations made by Dr. Eckford are reflected in the low Infant Mortality Rate, and this service should be accepted with eagerness by expectant mothers. The Consultant and Midwives are to be congratulated on the continued success of this clinic.

MIDWIFERY SERVICES.

The Holland County Council is the Supervising Authority for the Borough under the Midwives Act, 1936.

MATERNITY SERVICES.

Eight beds are set aside in Boston Maternity Ward for Borough cases. These are almost wholly booked up months ahead and cases have had to be transferred to the County Hospital, showing a need for further maternity bed accommodation.

A total of 92 mothers was admitted to the Maternity Unit through the Borough Scheme as compared with 99 last year. In addition 21 cases were admitted to the Wyberton West Hospital.

BOSTON INFANT WELFARE CENTRE.

The work of the Infant Welfare Centre has been carried out satisfactorily under existing conditions. The supply of dried foods has been maintained in spite of war-time conditions. The number of attendances at the Centre for the year was 7,941, slightly lower than last year.

Arrangements for Dental, Orthopædic, Ophthalmic and Tonsils and Adenoids cases.

TONSILS AND ADENOIDS.

Seventeen children under five years of age were referred for operative treatment in the Boston General Hospital, for Tonsils and Adenoids, of these 15 received treatment.

OPHTHALMIC TREATMENT.

Twenty-nine attendances were made by 14 children at the Ophthalmic Clinic during the year.

ORTHOPÆDIC AND U.V.L. TREATMENT.

With the exception of cases referred to Miss Morgan for U.V.L., Orthopædic treatment generally is arranged through the Holland County Council. The table below gives some idea of the scope of this service, a service which benefits considerably those children, who, without treatment, would go through life as cripples. It is interesting to record that the reserving of a bed at the County Emergency Hospital for our in-patients, has once again been justified, 7 children occupying beds there for a total of 411 days.

Clinic or Service	No. of children participating.	Total number of attendances.
County Emergency Hospital (Out-patients)	9	24
Massage and Exercise	8	159
Mr. Pilcher's Clinic	20	29
Bargate Clinic (Orthopædic and U.V.L.)	10	104
Visits by Orthopædic Nurse	9	102
Miss Morgan's (U.V.L.)	12	course of treatment.

DENTAL TREATMENT.

Ten children were referred from the Welfare Centre during the year to receive Dental Treatment.

BOSTON DAY NURSERY.

The Day Nursery has continued to function successfully during the year. The number of attendances has decreased from 8,907 to 5,937, due largely to the Day Nursery being closed for a period owing to lack of Staff and special Public Holidays. During the summer season the nursery was filled to capacity and there were several on the waiting list. I am sure the Day Nursery does very good service to the community, and the babies and toddlers are properly looked after.

Failing their attendances there, the babies are looked after by other women in their homes, in many cases not a very satisfactory proceeding.

SECTION C.

WATER SUPPLY

I am indebted to Mr. D. H. Ball, Water Engineer, for the following report on the Borough Water Supply :—

STATISTICS ETC.

Rainfall.—Revesby Waterworks for 1945 = 22.65 inches, a decrease of 2.52 inches on 1944 and 3.08 inches below the average for the past 41 years.

Volume of Water Supplied from Revesby and Fordington during 1945 = 368,423,000 galls., an average of 1,009,000 galls. per day, or approximately 60% increase during the past ten years.

Domestic and Trade Consumption in the Borough are estimated at 27 and 8.5 galls. per head per day respectively, and efforts are being made to effect a reduction in waste.

From a Public Health standpoint a considerable amount of beneficial plumbing work is being undertaken within the Corporation's Statutory Area of Supply, and combined with housing activities and improved standard of fittings there is ample evidence that the public are becoming more " Water Conscious ".

(1) (a) **Quality of Supply.** Based on the analyses made by the Royal Institute of Public Health on samples drawn from the main in various parts of the town at frequent intervals, the water has throughout the year been entirely satisfactory for domestic use.

There have been periodical complaints of discolouration and sand in the water, but the Water Committee and Council are fully aware of past difficulties especially during the war period, but with additional staff in the Department more attention will be given to general routine works of maintenance (e.g. systematic flushing of mains) and it is to be hoped that many of the old small size mains will in time be replaced and " dead ends " reduced to a minimum.

(b) **Quantity of Water Available.** The quantity available for domestic purposes has (with a few exceptions during peak demand periods in proximity of the Canning Factory on the south side of the town and to those blocks of houses which are supplied through one small size service pipe) been adequate.

Main pressures are admittedly poor during " peak demand periods " when the Canneries and other trade consumers are drawing heavily from the mains, but this and other matters are receiving attention.

The water is chlorinated prior to passing to supply and no adverse analyses have been received during the year 1945.

N.B.—During the major part of 1946 raw water samples will be taken for analysis **monthly** from Revesby and Fordington.

(2) The removal of iron and free carbonic acid from the Fordington water is to receive attention, together with additional filters at Revesby.

(3) No form of contamination was found during 1945.

(4) Approximately 5% of the houses in the area of supply are supplied by standpipes, but the Borough proportion is small.

A comprehensive Rural Water Supply Scheme is in course of preparation.

Signed,

D. H. BALL, M.Inst.M & Cy.E., A.I.W.E.

Water Engineer.

July, 1946.

SECTION D.

HOUSING AND SANITATION, ETC.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The sanitary circumstances of the Borough underwent practically no change during the year. The usual routine inspections were carried out by the Sanitary Staff, and the position at the end of the year was satisfactory.

RODENT CONTROL.

Systematic treatment of the sewers was carried out throughout the year (using the methods recommended by the Ministry of Food) and as a result it is estimated that over 5,000 rats were killed.

There are no major surface infestations within the Borough but regular work has been carried out on the Corporation refuse tips and by arrangement with the owners at the canning factories and other likely sources of infestation.

Two hundred and forty complaints were dealt with during the year, the Rodent Officer acting as far as possible in an advisory capacity. Good results were obtained by this method and the large majority of infestations in or around dwelling houses were abated.

HOUSING.

For the major part of the year no systematic house-to-house inspection was carried out but every endeavour was made to deal with urgent repairs and to maintain a reasonable standard of living accommodation.

In December house-to-house inspections were re-commenced and revealed the fact that with six years of more or less enforced neglect the general standard of housing had noticeably deteriorated. However, the shortage of materials and labour was still such that little could be done about it and on the whole systematic work of this nature appeared to be hardly worth while.

SEWERAGE.

There has been no extension of the system during the year.

The sewers of temporary housing schemes discharge into existing sewers with the exception of the Carlton Road Site which has a storm water discharge direct to the River Witham.

The Council has decided to construct a pumping station at the junction of Fydeil Crescent and George Street to relieve the flooding of George Street area which has occurred several times in recent years during exceptionally intense rainfalls.

HOUSE REFUSE COLLECTION.

House refuse is collected at fortnightly intervals. In view of the separation of kitchen waste and salvage this period is satisfactory.

Rainfall for 1945 (recorded at Church Road Pumping Station).

	Inches.
January	2.38
February	1.86
March	0.64
April	1.13
May	1.13
June	1.84
July	1.82
August	5.67
September	1.15
October	2.40
November	0.79
December	2.28

Greatest intensity—0.5 inches in 5 minutes, August 5th, 1945. On August 29th, 1945, 3.5 inches fell in $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours, maximum intensity 0.5 inches in 6 minutes.

SECTION E.

MILK SUPPLY.

This has not been altogether satisfactory although it showed an improvement over the previous year.

At the beginning of the summer, road haulage of bulk supplies was re-introduced and this resulted in the milk being delivered to the retailer in a fresher condition and complaints from consumers of poor keeping quality showed a marked decrease.

Inspections of dairies within the Borough were carried out regularly and conditions generally continued to be satisfactory.

Samples of all raw milks were regularly submitted for Plate Count, Coliform, and Methylene Blue Reduction Tests, while Pasteurised milks were examined by the Phosphatase Test.

One of the largest retailers in the Borough experienced considerable trouble with his bulk supply which was coming from a considerable distance, and mainly through the efforts of this department, supplies were obtained for him from a different and nearer source. This eliminated most of his difficulties and resulted in the public receiving milk in a fresher and better condition.

MEAT AND OTHER FOODS.

Under the Control of Livestock Scheme, carried out by the Ministry of Food, one centralised slaughterhouse, has been in use in the Borough serving the needs for the Boston Borough and the Boston Rural District.

The meat inspection is carried out by a qualified meat inspector in accordance with Memo. 62/Food.

			Beef	Mutton	Pork
Carcases examined	.....	.....	2723	4432	1950
Carcases condemned	.....	.....	83	3	50
Total weight condemned	.....		31 tons 15 cwts. 2 qtrs. 25 lbs.		

PREPARED FOOD PREMISES.

All premises used in connection with the manufacture of food-stuffs are registered by the local authority under the Food and Drugs Act.

Inspections are regularly carried out, and despite war conditions a fairly high standard of cleanliness has been maintained.

THE ADULTERATION OF FOODS—INSPECTIONS.

With the coming into operation of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, on the 1st October, 1939, the duties of sampling were transferred to the Holland County Council.

SECTION F.

PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

The following Infectious Diseases were notified during the year :—

	1944	1945
Typhoid	3	—
Scabies	24	205
Scarlet Fever	61	83
Whooping Cough	14	123
Diphtheria	5	8
Measles	8	620
Pneumonia	15	18
Puerperal Pyrexia	1	1
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	9	14
Chicken Pox	143	185
Malaria	1	—
Food Poisoning	5	—
Erysipelas	—	4
Measles—German	—	4
Dysentery	—	4

LABORATORY FACILITIES—PROVISION OF SERA.

Medical Practitioners are given every opportunity for the examination of clinical material, and fees are paid by the Authority where necessary.

The work is carried out at the Laboratory of the Holland County Council.

IMMUNISATION AGAINST DIPHTHERIA.

During the year 389 children completed a course of immunisation against Diphtheria. Of 1910 children under 5 1157 or 60% have been immunised, while of the 3610 between the ages of 5—14 3068 or 85% have also received the benefit of this service. Too much stress cannot be laid on the importance of every infant being immunised as soon as he or she reaches the age of 11 months.

TUBERCULOSIS.

No action was necessary during the year under the Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1925, or Section 172 of the Public Health Act, 1936.

Boston Port Health Authority.

ANNUAL REPORT

— of the —

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

Year ending 31st December, 1945.

Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit the following Report on the work carried out in connection with the Port Health administration during the year ended 31st December, 1945.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) D. C. ROBERTSON,

Medical Officer of Health.

(I.) Amount of Shipping entering the Port during the year 1945.

TABLE A.

		Number	Tonnage	Number inspected		Number reported to be Defective	Number of vessels on which defects were remedied	Number of vessels reported as having or having had during the voyage infectious disease on board
				By the Medical Officer of Health	By the Sanitary Inspector			
Foreign	Steamers ..	29	13,329	8	8	2	2	Nil
	Motor ..	49	8,921					
	Sailing ..	Nil	Nil					
	Fishing ..	Nil	Nil					
	Total Foreign ..	78	22,250	8	8	2	2	Nil
Coastwise	Steamers ..	118	22,978	12	6	Nil	Nil	Nil
	Motor ..	258	37,767					
	Sailing ..	Nil	Nil					
	Fishing ..	Nil	Nil					
	Total Coastwise	376	60,745	12	6	Nil	Nil	Nil
	Total Foreign and Coastwise	454	82,995	20	14	2	2	Nil

(II.) Character of Trade of Port.

TABLE B.

PRINCIPAL IMPORTS.—Grain, Deals, Battens and Boards, Sleepers, Telegraph Poles, Pine Logs, Flour, Bran and Sharps, Potatoes, Manure, Steel Billets, Granite, Shingle, Binder Twine, Bog Ore and General (Continental Goods).

PRINCIPAL EXPORTS.—Grain, Pig Iron, Potatoes, Vegetables, Basic Slag, Seeds, Sugar, Coal, General (Continental Goods).

(III.) Source of Water Supply.

The water supply is by the Boston Corporation Waterworks, for both Port and Shipping.

There are no Water Boats.

(IV.) Port Sanitary Regulations, 1933.

(1) Arrangements for dealings with Declarations of Health.

Customs and all shipping agents are supplied with forms. These are returned completed to the Medical Officer of Health by H.M. Customs Officers.

(2) Boarding of Vessels on arrival.

All infected or suspected vessels are boarded by the Medical Officer either at the Pilot Sloop or the landing stage immediately outside the Dock Gates ; this depends, of course, on the class of disease with which I have to deal.

(3) Notification to the Authority of inward vessels requiring special attention (wireless messages, land signal stations, information from pilots, Customs Officers, etc.).

Copies of the weekly list of Infected Ports are sent to the Pilots and H.M. Customs with a request that the Medical Officer be notified accordingly. The Medical Officer is connected by telephone with the Pilot Boarding Station (which is situated in the Wash, five miles from Port), and the telegraphic address " Port-helth " has been registered.

(4) Mooring Stations, designated under Article 10.

(a) Within the Docks.

The vacant berth in Boston Dock.

(b) Outside the Docks.

Quarantine Station—Clay Hole.

(5) Particulars of any standing exemptions from the provisions of Article 14.

NIL.

- (6) Experience of working of Article 16.
NIL.

TABLE C.

Cases of Infectious Sickness landed from vessels.

Disease.	No. of cases during 1945.		No. of Vessels concerned.	Average No. of Cases for previous 5 years.
	Passengers	Crew		
Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

TABLE D.

Cases of Infectious Sickness occurring on vessels during voyage, but disposed of prior to arrival.

Disease.	No. of cases during 1945.		No. of Vessels concerned.	Average No. of Cases for previous 5 years.
	Passengers	Crew		
Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

No case of Plague, Cholera, Yellow Fever, Smallpox or Typhus occurred during the year.

(V.) **Measure against Rodents.**

- (1) Steps taken for detection of rodent plague.
 - (a) In ships in the port. Sanitary Officer's examination of ships.
 - (b) On quays, wharves, warehouses, etc., in the vicinity of the port, The Boston Port Health Authority is the Authority under the Rats and Mice Destruction Act.

- (2) Measures taken to prevent the passage of rats between ships and the shore.

Masters of ships which are suspected of being rat-infested are instructed to provide mushrooms on their ropes.

- (3) Methods of deratisation of
 - (a) Ships. Sulphur fumigation where necessary.
 - (b) Premises in the vicinity of docks or quays.

Dock commissioners carry out continual gassing with a portable machine.

- (4) Measures taken for the detection of rat prevalence in ships and on shore.

Sanitary Officers' examination of ships, while the Boston Port Health Authority is the Authority under the Rats and Mice Destruction Act on shore.

- (5) Rat-proofing.

- (a) To what extent are docks, wharves, warehouses, etc., rat proof ?

The fruit shed (south side) is of iron construction and the floor of cement.

- (b) Action taken to extend rat-proofing.

The general merchandise warehouses on the north side of the Docks are of concrete.

RATS DESTROYED IN 1945.

TABLE E.

(1) On vessels Nil.

(2) In Docks, Quays, Wharves and Warehouses.

Disinfestation carried out by Port Health Authority.

Issue of Deratisation and Deratisation Exemption Certificates.

No certificates have been issued during the year, as Boston is not an approved Port. Certificates when required have been obtained from Grimsby.

FOOD INSPECTION.

No action was found to be necessary during the year under the Public Health (Imported Food) Regulations, 1937, the Public Health (Preservatives, etc. in Food) Regulations, 1925 to 1940, and the Food and Drugs Act 1938 (section 39).

PUBLIC HEALTH (SHELLFISH) REGULATIONS, 1934.

There are Mussel and Cockle Beds within the area of the Port Health Authority in the Wash. These are periodically inspected and samples of the shell-fish are taken for analysis.

